2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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an outstanding war record, was known to be courageous and not afraid to die, yet, because he was quick-tempered and murdered a member of his own band, he forfeited what would have been a very good chance of becoming leader of his band. Second, a man who had the reputation of being woman-crazy, of bothering other men's wives, or who was guilty of rape or incest, would not be selected as leader. Furthermore, a man who wished to rise should control his temper, be good to others and avoid lying, back-biting and jealousy in regard to other prominent men. If he had these qualities, and was eminent at war, he would rise high in public esteem and be in the running not only as a leader of a band, or of the whole tribe, but also as Keeper of one of the Sacred Pipes."[1]

It was further explained by this same informant, The Boy, that if the leader died, there was a lot of talk both by members and non-members as to who was qualified to succeed. Those outside the band speculated on whom the choice would fall and said: "It ought to be so-and-so," and in this way attempt to influence the opinion as to which of the outstanding men of the band had the best qualifications. Soon a certain man became the leader, and once he was invited to a meeting of other band leaders he was "full-fledged."

In carrying out his duties, that is, in deciding when and where to move, the leader consulted with others and proceeded in a democratic fashion. If two or more bands were camped together, for instance, the leaders would consult among themselves and come to a decision as to whether or not the bands should remain together and as to where they should go. Other men would be present and any one of them apparently had the privilege of speaking his mind. "Suppose that the leader had decided that his band should leave the other and go to some particular spot. Someone in his band who disagreed with the decision would speak up and raise the question of, say, danger from the enemy. He would suggest a different place free from such danger and where game would be plentiful, where there was a good camping ground and sufficient water for the horses, etc. He would give his reasons in detail, and, if it

[1] The role of the Keepers of the Flat and Feathered Pipes is discussed in detail in Cooper, Ms. 1949.

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seemed that the others present agreed with him, the leader would give in and have the crier announce the revised decision."

On the march, the leader went at the head of his band and showed the way. When several bands were together, the leader of one would have decided where he intended to go, and, if the other bands had decided to go along with this one, they followed, but were free to break away at any time.

The band to which either the Keeper of the Flat Pipe or the Keeper of the Feathered Pipe belonged had a certain distinction as there was a tendency when the tribe split for each to have a considerable following.

According to tradition, as related by The Boy, the Gros Ventres had had in the fairly remote past a formally selected chief or leader of the whole tribe. It was said that he functioned when the whole tribe was together and that his decisions in important matters were made in consultation with the chief men, including the leaders of all the bands. There was no regular council and anyone present might express his opinion. Often the Keepers of the Sacred Pipes were present at such meetings called by the tribal chief, but if they were not present they were supposed to be kept advised.

The last regularly selected leader of the whole tribe was said to have been White Eagle, who held this position in the last decades of the eighteenth century. It was said further that White Eagle was preceded by White Shield, of whom there are many stories extant, and that White Shield was preceded by Elk Going Against The Wind. The Boy gave the following information regarding the "election" of White Eagle. The account was given to The Boy by his father, Lame Bull, who had it from Old Man Gopher, a cousin of Lame Bull's paternal grandfather. "The Gros Ventres had been badly decimated by smallpox and only about 30 lodges were left.[1] Old Man Gopher and his sister, both of them very young children at the time, were the only survivors of their family. The old men among the survivors of the tribe got together and proceeded to choose a chief. White Eagle was then a young man

[1] A reasonable chronological estimate would identify this as a tradition referring to the devastating smallpox epidemic of 1780. For historical data, see p. 9.

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CHAPTER II

THE FLAT PIPE

KEEPERSHIP

The Flat Pipe was ordinarily in the custody of an official keeper called nätcä:ta' (nätcä, chief) with his head wife as co-keeper, nä:tciθä (chief woman) and one of their young children as pipe child, nätcɔta:niθɔ'.

In olden times before the coming of the whites according to the tradition as handed down to The Boy and Thick, the Flat Pipe was hereditary in one of the families or bands—which one is unknown. The man and wife chosen, from within the family or band, to be keeper and co-keeper were usually a couple in the prime of life, not an old man married to a young woman or an old woman married to a very young man. A couple in the prime of life were chosen so that, even though they already had children, they could still have more. For it was the tribal law that they should designate out of their children, a boy or girl, born after they had entered upon their keepership to remain with them and to succeed to the keepership should both the keeper and his wife die by accident or sickness. Nearly always they designated a boy, rarely a girl, as the keeper had ordinarily to be a man. The Boy and Thick thought that this system of hereditary keepership came to an end long ago as a result perhaps of the fact that a keeper might have had no children or children died off, or the complete dying out of the family or band in which the Pipe was then hereditary.

In historic times, that is, as far back as definite tribal memory goes, non-hereditary succession has prevailed. It took two forms, elective and volunteer. In the first case, the initiative was taken by others than the prospective keeper; in the second, by the prospective keeper himself. To become an official keeper a man had to be formally inaugurated with a rite which will be described later. In certain emergencies the Pipe was temporarily without

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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such an official keeper and was merely held by someone for the time being.

From data supplied mostly by The Boy and Coming Daylight, it is possible to trace the fortunes of the Flat Pipe during the last hundred years. Somewhere about 1850 the Flat Pipe keeper was Deer, who was succeeded by "Bear-going-along-side-of-hill," from whom it was ceremonially transferred about 1860-65 to The Boy's father, Lame Bull. One or two of Lame Bull's successors died before completing the customary four-year term, and Lame Bull took the Pipe back. About 1873-75 it was ritually transferred to Crow Bull, Coming Daylight's mother's brother and a good friend of Lame Bull, as a result of a vow made by Crow Bull to take the keepership if the wife, who had been captured by the Piegan, should get back safely to him, which she did.

Coming Daylight gave the story as follows:

"In the 1869 battle between the Gros Ventres and the Piegan, a wife of my uncle, Crow Bull, was captured by the Piegan. After some time the man who captured her and who had taken her as wife saw her crying and asked her: 'Why are you crying?' She replied: 'I am lonesome for my children.' She had borne no children during her stay with the Piegan. So he told her: 'All right. I am a man, a real chief. I will let you go back to your children. But it would be dangerous for you to go on horseback. You must walk.'

"So on the sly he fixed up a big traveling dog to pack food and she made moccasins for the journey. He told her which way to go, this is, by way of Fort Benton where there were some Piegan and Gros Ventre women married to whites. He also told her she must travel by night lest the Piegan capture her again, and he accompanied her quite a way on her journey.

"After two days on the road, traveling by night and hiding in the day, she reached Fort Benton safely just at daybreak on the third. When she got there she did not know where to go. She saw someone emptying water, who looked like an Indian woman, so she went up to her. The woman said: 'Oh, where did you come from?' 'I came from the Piegan,' she replied, 'my Piegan husband there let me go.' The woman said: 'After you have eaten I will

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take you to a camp of Gros Ventres.' 'Who are they?' she asked, 'What is their name?' The woman told her: 'A little short man called Warrior Man,' who was a brother of the returned woman through marriage.

"So the woman took the returned Gros Ventre woman to this camp and said: 'I have brought you a Gros Ventre woman. Come and see who it is.' As soon as they saw who it was, they were glad and took her and kissed her and gave her everything good.

"One evening a few days later Warrior Man and his wife got ready and before sunup started off for the big Gros Ventre camp. He walked while Crow Bull's wife rode horseback. It was springtime with wet snow still on the ground. The big camp was at Big Sandy, on the north side of Milk River at the place where the trees stop. They arrived there early in the morning and did not know where to go. I, Coming Daylight, saw the man and the two women approaching and went out to see who they were. The man asked: 'Where is Crow Bull's lodge?' I then saw them go to Crow Bull's lodge. All at his lodge were glad to see the returned captive and kissed her.

"Later when the ground got dry, the whole tribe moved to their usual place here at what is now Hays. Crow Bull made good his vow to take the Flat Pipe if his wife got back safe to him, and I witnessed the transfer, by the keeper of the time, Lame Bull. The rite took place just about a half mile north of where St. Paul's Mission now is."

Crow Bull kept the Pipe a long time, until his death in 1887, upon which it fell to his widow, an Assiniboine woman named Coming Day. This woman neglected the Pipe. Coming Daylight told her: "Now, this Pipe is just like your father. Why is he always left alone? He was never left alone before. Now I have a mare and this Pipe has a saddle. Put the Pipe on the saddle and take it to White Bird. He will take care of it." So they went to White Bird and talked to him first. He agreed to take it over without rite or vow. On the request of a young man, Bird Sits High, the Pipe was transferred to him. This young man died soon after and his father, Otter Robe, took it upon himself to harbor the Pipe. When Otter Robe died, sometime prior to 1908,

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793 Horse Capture, the brother of Thick and the Assiniboine woman, Coming Day, who was still living—who had married Horse Capture and in her latter days had come to realize her duties toward the Pipe,—were ritually inaugurated as Pipe keeper and Pipe woman by Lame Bull. Then Coming Day died, as did also in 1908 Lame Bull, and Horse Capture was left alone with the Pipe. He married again and The Boy's mother, who had earlier been Pipe woman, instructed Horse Capture's second wife in her ritual duties. Horse Capture was the last ritual keeper of the Pipe. When Horse Capture died, his widow took the Pipe over. Thick wanted to bury the Pipe with Horse Capture, but was dissuaded from doing so, and agreed to keep it. Later Horse Capture's widow, who lived successively with Thick's family, the Birdtail family, and The Boy's family, willed the Pipe to The Boy, to dispose of it as he saw fit. On her death, The Boy wanted to take it over but his wife as a Catholic objected. The Boy finally got [795] her consent on the ground that "we are both Catholics; I want to keep the Pipe as a keepsake, not to pray to as it used to be prayed to," but it was arranged that the Pipe would remain in the keeping of Thick (married to The Boy's sister) until The Boy and his wife were ready to take it.

[755] The last ritual opening of the Pipe bundle occurred in 1937 as a prayer for cure, when Joe Assiniboine's small son was affected with bad sores on his face. The rite was only partially and negligently carried out at the time. The final formal uncovering of the Pipe took place on February 6, 1946, after the return of [727] the Gros Ventre members of the armed forces from World War II. On this occasion the full rite, as far as recalled, was enacted, and the Pipe and Pipe bundle given a thorough cleaning and renovating. The bundle with the Pipe is now (1955) carefully kept at The Boy's ranch at Lodge Pole.

The elective system rather than the voluntary vow was the more common one. Under this system, where the actual keeper decided to give up and transfer the Flat Pipe, he would confidentially summon the surviving ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers (not the other wives) of both the Flat and Feathered Pipes to come secretly without a word to anybody, to meet at his lodge,

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on a given night after everybody was asleep lest the matter became known and the prospective electee take flight. When a rumor would spread that a new election was imminent, those who thought they might be elected used commonly to go away and sleep elsewhere than in their own lodges, as almost all were reluctant to become keepers. Those invited to the election meeting had to keep absolute secrecy beforehand, and at the meeting itself no one else than the keeper and co-keeper and the above invitees was present except two attendants, sons of keepers or ex-keepers.

The actual keeper might open the discussion by proposing a name. Discussion was free but dignified. Agreement would be finally reached, perhaps well after midnight or towards morning, on the keeper's first choice or on some other man. Knowing how onerous the keepership was, the keeper out of the regard for the ex-keepers would not be apt to nominate one of their sons, and ordinarily did not nominate one of his own.

The proposed keeper had to be a prominent member of the tribe, a man of great ability and renown, with a record of recognized achievement and with very considerable wealth in horses, in the size and furnishings of his lodge, and so forth. He had to be of the cream of the tribe, or "the best among many." And he had "to be good" as the Gros Ventre ethical code conceived goodness. He had to be generous; a stingy man, even though a great warrior, and even though he had vowed to become keeper, would never get the Pipe, for the keeper had to feed people and to be good to them and have pity on them. A murderer of a fellow tribesman could not become keeper, nor could a "professional" gambler, that is, one who is known to have supernatural gambling power. In general one guilty of grave crime such as rape or theft from fellow tribesman, or of habitual marked moral delinquency or defect, such as lying, backbiting, felony, disbelief in or disrespect for holy things, was barred from the keepership as he was barred from rising high in the prestige scale.

After the choice was finally decided upon, the whole party with others of their kin proceeded secretively before or toward daybreak to the lodge of the electee to seize him bodily by surprise before he could escape. Once seized or even only elected he had practically

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743 [681] no choice but to accept. If he did not accept, there was no legal punishment inflicted such as physical violence, killing or banishment, but rather a supernatural one. It was thought that some grave evil would befall the person chosen if he did not accept the office.

The two following episodes, narrated by The Boy, from his father's and his own life throw some further light on the elective system and prevalent attitudes of reluctance to being elected as keeper. While the keepership carried with it great prestige, the reluctance is quite understandable in view of the severe restrictions and taboos that went with the keepership.

"When Lame Bull was a young man, just having reached maturity, he had a very close good friend, Kitfox Head. The two solemnly agreed that they would never become keepers of either the Flat or the Feathered Pipe, as being a keeper meant having a hard life. They agreed to avoid this office but to work hard in order to become outstanding men, warriors, with a life of freedom. They so grew up and married, remaining fast friends all the time.

"When Lame Bull was in his thirties, before reaching middle age, the Gros Ventres were on one occasion camped at the eastern end of the brush nearest to where St. Paul's Mission now is. Lame Bull, who then had three wives, was sleeping soundly one night when an old woman came to the door of his tent, woke him up and warned him: 'They are perhaps going to make you keeper. A big crowd is on its way, making for your lodge.' Lame Bull said to one of his wives: "Look out and see if the old woman is right.' She did and said: 'Yes. They are here close.'

"The crowd was too close for him to escape through the door, so he pushed his way out through the back of his lodge. Once out he gave one look back, saw the crowd and dashed for liberty. He ran round west and north to the right of the canyon up from where the Mission now is and into the mountains, leaving his wives.

"The first two wives made their way out through the door. The keeper stood at the door but could not prevent their escape as his hands were engaged in holding a pipe. The 'strong man' of the crowd was too busy looking for Lame Bull to think of the wives.

[1 i.e., the elatee as Keeper of the Flat Pipe. -Analyst]

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The keeper knew Lame Bull had only three wives and when he saw that two had gotten away and that the third and last was coming out, he said: 'Be sure to get this one. She is the last.' She was the youngest of the three, the mother of The Boy. Somebody did seize her. 793

"Then the members of the crowd pulled out all the picket pins and grabbed everything they could find. But they did not get everything belonging to Lame Bull and his wives, for the brother of the oldest wife had stolen into the crowd in order to protect his sister's property, and he was a good fighter, a man to be reckoned with. When the crowd started raiding, he threw the people right and left, fighting, hitting and pushing them, and so saved his sister's bed and some of her things.

"The crowd had gotten one of Lame Bull's wives but could not find him, and were undecided what to do. They finally agreed to take Lame Bull's wife back with them. They put a robe down and said to her: 'Sit on this. We are going to carry you back on that robe.' But when they lifted her up and put her on it she jumped off, saying: 'I don't want to be carried. I would rather walk.' One of the men, a cousin of hers, said: 'Get on to it, or else we will whip you.' So she got on it and they carried her over (to the keeper's lodge, apparently). When they arrived there they all sat down and took their places just as if Lame Bull were there, with the wife seated next to the keeper's wife. [482]

"Then the ex-keeper, who had transferred the Pipe to the keeper from whom Lame Bull had just run, said, 'I will try to call my friend (Lame Bull). Maybe he does not want to be keeper.' So the keeper gave his place to this ex-keeper who then started to perform the rite for summoning unwilling persons.

"All this time Lame Bull was hiding up in the mountains, and it so happened that his horses were grazing nearby. As he looked at them he was more than ever determined never to become a keeper, for he did not want to give his horses away as he would have to do as keeper. So while he was listening to the singing and rattling of the rite, he said to himself: 'Sing all you want. I'll never go down there.'

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●793 "As, however, the singing continued, Lame Bull started to think seriously. He could hear the singing clearly as he was quite close. The rite went on. At last he looked at his horses again and thought to himself: 'I have many horses. I believe I'll surely have some of them left. I think I'll go down and become keeper. Probably they have my wives anyhow, and my children will be hungry and lonesome.'

"So Lame Bull came down off the mountain and half ran all the way back to camp. But he did not go straight to the keeper's lodge. He went instead to the lodge of some of his old women relatives with the idea of getting something to eat first, because he was hungry and he knew the rite of installation would take a long time. On reaching the old women's lodge he was given a good scolding by them, and they told him: 'The party has your youngest wife. She is over there.' 'I'm going over,' he said, 'but first give me something to eat.' They did so, but he could not eat much. Meanwhile the singing started again. As soon as he was through eating he went straight to the keeper's lodge, entered, and walked clockwise to the keeper. The ex-keeper still had the Flat Pipe in his hands. Lame Bull took hold of the Pipe, and the ex-keeper was glad. So Lame Bull went through the whole installation rite and became keeper. The rite cost him, among other things, 20 horses of his own, 3 from Kitfox Head, and others from his relatives, a total of 30. All through his life, Lame Bull thought that his being summoned with the Flat Pipe by the ex-keeper from a distance of a couple of miles was one of his greatest experiences."

The foregoing account of Lame Bull's reluctance to accept, but final acceptance of, the Flat Pipe had been gotten by The Boy from his father. The following account of The Boy's reluctance is from himself.

"At one period in my early life I had a dream that the Flat Pipe wished me to be keeper. A second time I had the dream. I mentioned the dreams to nobody. A third time I had a dream in which the Pipe said to me: 'If you refuse the request I make of you, something will change the prosperity you are now enjoying.' At this time I was in the prime of life, in good health, very

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successful with plenty of money and with large herds of cattle and horses.

"I worried about the dreams, so I told my father who was still alive then. He made no reply at first; he was apparently in deep thought. After a while he said to me: 'I have decided that it is best for you not to be keeper. You are young, entering the prime of life.' My father did not think I should throw my life away, in view of the restrictions imposed on the keeper. I was willing to become keeper but I respected my father's advice and I followed it. My father said: 'Make a sweat lodge and we will make an offering instead of your being made keeper.' And this we did. Someone else then became keeper, namely, Thick's brother, Horse Capture.

"Then Lame Bull died, and not many years after I met adversity in my ranching and all my worldly affairs went wrong. Since then I have never been able to reach the height of prosperity that I had previously enjoyed. But I am not angry over this. I still keep my respect for the Flat Pipe because it is one of the chief things in the life of my ancestors."

A variant of the elective procedure above described occurred where the electee was close kin to the keeper. Thus around 1873, just before Crow Bull fulfilled his vow of taking the Flat Pipe, Big Beaver was keeper of the Feathered Pipe and Lame Bull keeper of the Flat Pipe, and one of Bull Lodge's sisters was the wife of Big Beaver and another the wife of Lame Bull. Both keepers at about the same time planned to make the transfer of their respective Pipes to Bull Lodge, brother-in-law of both. The two sisters came one right after the other to Bull Lodge to notify him of the decisions. Since the two women were his sisters he could not well refuse. He agreed: "All right. I am glad. Only one thing I ask. Tell my brothers-in-law not to make a raid on my lodge. Come after I make my new lodge (in the fall), and I will accept whichever Pipe is brought me first." Actually the Feathered Pipe party came first and Bull Lodge became Feathered Pipe keeper.

The new keeper chose one of his wives, often the chief or oldest one, to be co-keeper with him. The keeper's other wives were not

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793 co-keepers with her, but they or one of them would substitute for her in such minor duties as taking the Pipe out of the lodge in the morning and bringing it back in the evening when she was sick abed, or busy, or during her menses. During menses the [84] co-keeper was not allowed to handle the Pipe. After Crow Bull, 784] during his keepership, gave away his head wife and co-keeper, Digger, to Small White Cow in a drunken spree and Digger went away as wife to Small White Cow, Crow Bull's second oldest wife, Coming Day became co-keeper in Digger's place. If a man at the [784] time of becoming keeper had a young wife with an infant, she and the infant were sent away to another lodge as infant-crying was not allowed in the keeper's lodge where the Pipe was.

The Flat Pipe keeper, if he had two or more children, chose one and one only of his children, more commonly a boy, to be Pipe Child. It was a strict rule that he could keep only one of his children with him; all his other children had to live elsewhere than in their father's lodge, because, for one important reason, the Pipe was jealous. Some keepers were such rigorists in the matter that they practically forgot all their other children.

793 The children that were put out of their father's lodge naturally found this hard and rebelled, but they were trained to take it as 784 a matter of course. A special interest was taken by others in such 543 children as they were felt to be unfortunate in being deprived of the care and affection of their own parents. These children were permitted to visit their father and mother but they were under restrictions when they did so. Their grandmothers or foster parents would instruct them how to behave on such visits. They could not stay long, much less sleep there. They had to sit quiet in a special place in their parents' lodge and not roam around in it freely. They had to stay mostly near the door and not go near where the Pipe was. They were strictly forbidden to play in their father's lodge when visiting there. If their mother gave them something to eat they could eat it. They could sit on her lap. [781] But they could not talk loud or shout. When so visiting they were not at ease and felt sort of foreign and awestricken. The Boy 793 thought that these children may have been jealous of their sibling, 543 the Pipe Child, but in such case they would have had to keep

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their feelings to themselves, for any show of such feelings would be contrary to the deep veneration due to the Pipe and its official personnel. They had to be resigned to have that particular sibling as the Pipe Child. When the keeper gave up his keepership, some of his children might go back to their father's lodge but not necessarily all of them. Some had gotten used to living elsewhere and just remained there.

The Boy's own experience may further illustrate the foregoing situation.

He was born while his father, Lame Bull, was keeper of the Flat Pipe, and consequently he was born not in his father's lodge but in that of one of his grandmothers. His mother went back to his father's lodge, but she used to come to his grandmother's lodge to nurse and look after him. In his earliest years he had four or five "grandmothers" or great-grandmothers [real and classificatory] living, one of them his mother's mother. He stayed most of the time with his maternal grandmother and with her mother. It was from these grandmothers that he got most of the affectionate attention he craved and most of his early training and instruction. Every night, too, one or other of the grandmothers would tell old-time stories and Ni:hohat tales. After a while he was permitted to go to his father's lodge but only for a little while at a time, but he was not allowed to live or sleep there. He never addressed his parents as "father" or "mother," but only by their given names, although there was no taboo in the matter, and his younger brother Andrew Lame Bull used the former manner of address. The Boy as a child did not feel much inclined to "play baby" and sit alongside his father and mother, as other Gros Ventre children did, to get special attention, but he did act so elsewhere, around his grandmothers and great-grandmothers. He did not go to live in his father's lodge until he was about nine (or eleven?) years old, after his father had ceased being Pipe keeper, and by this time he was able to take pretty good care of himself, to ride horseback, and so forth.

All of The Boy's eight brothers and sisters—he was the ninth—who survived infancy were reared outside their father's lodge, except the one who was Pipe child. After Lame Bull's keepership

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ended, all of them just invaded their father's lodge. The Pipe child did not measure up to Lame Bull's expectations, so the latter's attention slowly centered on The Boy. Lame Bull, as an ex-keeper, still practiced some of the Pipe ceremonies, and The Boy came to act the part of "Pipe child" in these for his father.

Rite of Transfer

When the keeper of the Flat Pipe was about to transfer it to a successor he would invite to his lodge for a secret night meeting the surviving ex-keepers with their ex-co-keeper wives of both the Flat and the Feathered Pipes. The Feathered Pipe ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers were present purely as invited guests. They did not have any voice in decisions nor did they do any prompting. The first task of the assembled Flat Pipe group was to choose the new keeper, as previously described. The Flat Pipe ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers, further, remained with the transferring keeper and his co-keeper wife throughout the rite of transfer, to prompt and correct them in case they should forget, be in doubt about, or incorrectly perform some part of the rite. Two young men attendants, usually sons of keeper or ex-keepers, were present throughout the election transfer.

After the group had decided who should be next keeper, they quietly scattered and gathered together their relatives and reassembled outside the actual keeper's lodge. The whole party then proceeded quietly, at night before dawn when the camp was asleep, to the selectee's lodge, the keeper in the lead holding the bared Flat Pipe stem forward and slanting upward, with the bowl in his cupped left hand and the stem in his upturned right palm, at about breast height. One of the party, an ex-keeper or one of his sons or other kin, a physically powerful man, had been designated as the person to grab and hold the selectee in case he tried to run away.

The party usually succeeded in reaching the selectee's lodge without arousing anyone. On arrival thereat they all shouted noisily. This was the signal for the strong man to dash into the selectee's lodge and seize him. Any other member of the party could grab the selectee's wife who was to be co-keeper pipe

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woman. Once grabbed she ceased to struggle, took a blanket or robe, sat down and covered her head so she could not see anything. She so remained with head covered until the transfer ceremony began. After the two were seized and held fast, the members of the party raided the belongings of the selected couple, grabbing everything in sight, and no matter how valuable, keeping it for their own. When the raid was over the selectee was "penniless." All his property was gone. He had nothing left but his wife.

The selectee then had a good fire made to give light, and sent his other wives and his children away from the lodge. All the raiding party, too, left except the selectee and co-selectee wife, the keeper and his co-keeper wife, the ex-keepers and their ex-co-keeper wives and the two young men attendants. From then on the rite was secret and no one else was allowed to be present or to peek in.

The elite group then marched into the selectee's lodge, the keeper in the lead still holding the Flat Pipe. The keeper next went to the selectee, holding the stem toward him and handed him the Pipe. The selectee took hold of it with both hands wherever there was room next to the keeper's hands. With both men holding the Pipe, the keeper said: "Here, my grandson, is your Pipe." To this he replied: "My grandfather, I am glad to receive this Pipe."

With both still holding the Pipe, the keeper now touched first the right and then the left shoulder or side of chest of the selectee with the Pipe and released his hold of the Pipe. From this moment the selectee was keeper, and the transferring keeper became an ex-keeper.

Next the new keeper, holding the Pipe, and his co-keeper wife, were both carried, on robes or blankets in procession while the marchers sang, to the transferring ex-keeper's lodge. By this procession and its accompanying singing it became known publicly that a transfer of the Pipe had taken place. On arrival the new keeper deposited the Pipe in its place on its wrappings. Here the first teaching of the new keeper and co-keeper began, and lasted throughout the following day. Here they remained throughout the same day and until the morning of the day after, obliged to

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793 fast from both food and water until the feast on the second day.
*796 The Pipe remained in the transferring keeper's lodge all the rest of this first night, and throughout the next day and night, not fully wrapped, but loosely covered.

The first day, at the transferring keeper's lodge, was devoted mostly to teaching the new keeper and co-keeper the various rites as well as the obligations, prerogatives, powers, taboos and etiquette observances connected with the keepership. All this was done secretly, with no one present except the new keeper and co-keeper, the co-keepers and ex-co-keepers and the two attendants. The new keeper and co-keeper were coached chiefly by the retiring keeper and co-keeper respectively, who however would where necessary, be assisted, prompted, corrected or even in some matters superseded by some of the other better informed Flat Pipe ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers. Whenever the instructing last keeper was in doubt he would ask the other ex-keepers present. For giving such coaching the instructors had to be paid well by the new keeper, in horses or any other property which he may still have had left after the previous night's raid and which his relatives, coming to his aid, would provide. By the end of the instruction, which continued through to the third day of the transfer rite, the man's relatives might themselves be "penniless." For each segment of instruction a payment had to be made. The payments were generally made to the retiring keeper and co-keeper, who would keep part and distribute the remainder to the other ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers and also to his relatives who had helped him out when he had become keeper.

Instruction continued through this first day until sundown. That night the new keeper and co-keeper slept in the lodge of the retiring keeper where the Pipe was.

The second day of the transfer ceremony was given over chiefly to further instruction and to the double-lodge rite.

This double lodge was made right in the middle of the camp circle by taking down two big lodges and setting them up in figure-8 ground plan to form one large interior without obstruction or "veil" between and with the long double-axis running north and south. The Pipe was carried to the double lodge and de-

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posited in the north section thereof, which was reserved for the Pipe and for new keeper and co-keeper, who walked there from the retiring keeper's lodge, and for the ex-keepers, ex-co-keepers and two attendants. The cover of this northern section was down, but that of the southern was lifted up to let the people look in and watch. Into the southern section went a group of Sacrifice Lodge men and another of Stars, and each group sat in its own circle on either side of the interior. Other people would also come in till all space was occupied. Children were not allowed to fool around the double lodge and dogs were kept away, but the general public was welcome. During the following song contest the new keeper and co-keeper sat with heads covered and faces hidden.

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When all was ready, at the word from the ex-keeper's party, the Sacrifice Dancers and Stars shouted and beat their drums, then stopped. After that the retiring keeper started singing the Flat Pipe song "My holiness, have pity on me," all the other ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers joining in. At the same time the Sacrifice Dancer and Star groups each started one of its own songs. The singing recalled the gladness that followed upon the first making of dry land, the increase and welfare of the succeeding generations under fidelity to the old beliefs and under good leadership, and the wish that the new keeper would perpetuate all this and that his leadership would be successful.

The simultaneous singing of the three distinct songs was also a sort of contest to see which group was "stronger," which group or individual would amidst this bedlam of conflicting choruses first sing false. Rivalry was keen but good-natured between the three groups of singers. The moment any one member of any of the three groups began to sing false, that is, if a Star sang the Sacrifice Dancer's song or an ex-keeper sang the Star's song, the singing stopped. Everybody knew at once which group had made the mistake, but not which individual. He had to confess. This was made public and everybody including the onlookers, laughed at and bantered the one who sang false and his group. Then a recess was taken and they sat around and chatted and smoked. After the recess, the same procedure was repeated; then came another recess, followed by a third contest and recess.

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At the end of the recess after the third "crazy singing," the boisterous hilarity gave place to sober seriousness, and the solemn secret instruction and consecration of the new keeper and co-keeper were resumed in the northern section of the double lodge. About this time, too, the new Pipe child came into the lodge, and the heads and faces of the new keeper and co-keeper were uncovered. In general when, during their training, the two were learning by hearing, their heads were covered so they could concentrate their attention on what they heard; while, when learning by seeing, their heads were uncovered. The covering of the head at certain times, as on the march to the keeper's lodge immediately after the previous night's notification and raid and as during the "crazy singing," seems also to have had an "ascetic" purpose, just as the abstention from food and smoking throughout most of this first day had.

[524] The instruction after the "crazy singing" concerned primarily the ritual of smoking the Flat Pipe. Right after the uncovering of the heads of the keeper and co-keeper, the retiring keeper took peppermint leaves and gave some to the new keeper, while the retiring co-keeper did the same, giving some to the new co-keeper. Then each of the four chewed the leaves, spat three times on his or her own hands, rubbed the hands together then with the right palm rubbed his or her own left forearm up to the shoulder and with left palm the right forearm up to the shoulder, and finally with right palm from the mouth up over the face and hair to the occiput,—three rubbing or laving motions in all. This was done three times in succession.

[390] After this peppermint laving came the fumigation or smudging rite. At the word of the retiring keeper the first of the two attendants, to the west of the door, with two sticks as tongs took a lighted buffalo chip from the fire in the center of the lodge and placed it on the incense mound (to be described later), and went back to his place, proceeding clockwise throughout. The retiring keeper then took from the supply alongside him a pinch of dried peppermint leaves in the tips of his five right-hand fingers and crawled on his knees to the incense hearth. There, kneeling squatted on his heels, and facing east, he held his hand, finger tips

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down, at shoulder height and sang the incense song while the other members of his party joined in, and at the conclusion of the song said: "Yo!" Then he lowered his hand a little, sang with the others the same song, and ended with the recited "Yo!" Finally he further lowered his hand close to the hearth, sang with the others the same song, and at the end made three circles clockwise with his hand around the burning chip saying at each circle: "Yo'ho ho ho" (Yo followed by glottal stop; ho ho ho, in lower pitch, not emphatic), and after the third circle released the peppermint on the chip. Then he turned toward the south, and the same triple rite was repeated, and finally toward the west, with repetition of the rite.

Immediately after this, the retiring keeper, the new keeper, the retiring co-keeper, and the new co-keeper, in this order, fumigated themselves. Each put his (or her) hands palm down, in the peppermint incense smoke, rubbed his hands together, rubbed the left arm from the tips of fingers up to the shoulder with the right palm and the right arm likewise with the left palm. This was done three times. Then three times in succession he put his right palm over the incense, lifted his palm to his mouth, and inhaled. Then he held both palms over the incense and passed them from his mouth up over his face and hair to his occiput.

The Pipe child also went through both the peppermint laving and the fumigating rite in each case after the other four participants.

The retiring keeper next filled the Flat Pipe with tobacco. He took a little tobacco in the five fingers of his right hand, finger tips down, while holding the Pipe by the bowl in his left hand. Poising his right hand about a foot above the bowl, he spat a little. Then he made a pass with the tobacco down a little nearer to the bowl and spat. Next he repeated the pass still nearer, and spat, and put the tobacco in the bowl. Then he filled the bowl with tobacco. Then laid the Pipe down with stem to the east on sage brush between the hearth and the pipe bed. After this a recess was taken. The party chatted and smoked socially or left the lodge.

After the recess, the retiring keeper would say to all: "Let

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793 *796 us begin again. Keep quiet," and to the first attendant: "Bring a live buffalo chip." The attendant did so, put it on the hearth, and returned to his place. The retiring keeper then took a pinch of dried peppermint leaves, and after the triple successive lowering and three clockwise circles above described, but without song or spoken word, released the peppermint, dropping it on the smoldering chip.

[516] Squatting on his knees and heels instead of cross-legged, so that he could move around more easily, he took up the Flat Pipe, grasping it by the stem, palms up, with his left hand nearer the bowl. Then he circled the stem through the incense and upward until it pointed *east* and held it steady a moment at this point. He repeated the circling and pointing at a lower level, again at a still lower one, and finally made three clockwise circles with the bowl around the incense. Next he repeated the same smudging but toward the *south;* finally, toward the *west.*

After the smudging came the solemn prayer (to be described later) said by the retiring keeper, kneeling upright and holding the Pipe with the stem pointing, not to any point of the compass, but vertically upward. At the end of the prayer he let himself down on his heels, still kneeling, and held the Pipe in position to smoke. He ordered the first attendant: "Bring a live buffalo chip." The attendant thereupon took a chip from the lodge hearth with a forked stick and applied it to the tobacco in the Pipe. The keeper puffed the Pipe until the tobacco was lit, and then took three distinct puffs, blowing the smoke upward around and downward around. Then he passed the Pipe to the new keeper, first swinging it upward. The new keeper, after taking three puffs and blowing the smoke up and down in the same manner, took a real full smoke with the Pipe. Then he passed it clockwise to the nearest ex-keeper to the east, who smoked it, but without swinging it upward. Then it was passed in turn clockwise to the other ex-keepers, if there were others, to be smoked but not swung, till it reached the last nearest the door. The ex-co-keepers did not smoke the Pipe in this or in any other Flat Pipe rite. Then the lighted Pipe was passed back anti-clockwise, without smoking, and without swinging upward except by the new keeper (this honor

[516] [412] [276]

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was reserved to the new keeper), and with tamping by the retiring keeper as it passed him, till it reached the last ex-keeper on the west side of the lodge. Then it was passed clockwise back toward the new keeper, each ex-keeper on the west side smoking it in turn, till it reached the retiring keeper. By this time the tobacco would probably be all smoked up, so he would dump it out by lifting up the Pipe, horizontal and bowl up, to head height, then lowering it still horizontal and bowl up, and finally turning the bowl over,—all this being done very slowly.

Another important part of the transfer rite was the blessing of the person and clothing of the new keeper and co-keeper, but when it occurred, before or after the Pipe smoking, was not cleared up. According to The Boy, "Every part of the new keeper was blessed, even his mouth, that is, his talk was blessed," but we obtained only the following details. The new keeper and co-keeper (and Pipe child) were painted by the retiring keeper on the forehead and under the jawbone and chin as signifying the world above and the earth respectively. The retiring keeper also chewed peppermint leaves and spat upon the two, to signify that they must "quiet down and be good."

The moccasins and feet of the new keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child were treated as follows. The retiring keeper took peppermint leaves in his mouth, chewed them, spat three times on the sole of one moccasin (moccasined foot) of the new keeper, lowered it down in three stages over the smudge of the sacred hearth, and circled it three times around the hearth. Then he took a pinch of poisonous wild parsley (see infra), spat three times on his palms, rubbed the palms together and rubbed the sole of the moccasin with his palm three times from toe to heel. The same treatment was given to the keeper's other moccasin by the retiring keeper, then to the new co-keeper's moccasins by the retiring co-keeper, and lastly to the new Pipe child's moccasins by the retiring keeper. At the end of the whole transfer these blessed moccasins were taken off and put in the Flat Pipe bundle, and were worn only during rites, not as everyday footwear. Every other piece of clothing of the new keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child was blessed with peppermint and fumigation, apparently with a similar rite

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793 *796 [784] [302] [778] [837] [784] [262 784]

although without the wild parsley, but we did not obtain details.

After ritual treatment of their wearing apparel, the new keeper and co-keeper had to take off any ring, necklace or other personal adornment made of copper, iron or other metal, as the wearing of metal adornments was forbidden them, apparently because such were from the whites. The two, but not the Pipe child, were each ritually invested with a necklace consisting of a large single shell on a string of twisted, not plaited, buckskin. The investure was done with three motions as if putting the necklace on, and at the third it was actually put on. Further the keeper, but not the co-keeper, had to frame his hair over his forehead with a large pompadour, as a sign of distinction.[1]

The new co-keeper also put some dried peppermint leaves mixed with poisonous wild parsley in a little buckskin sack which she then wore on her belt. This had a double purpose. First, the mixture being poisonous, she commanded respect. She must not be molested or even be bodily touched. Whoever molested or even touched her would suffer fits or spasms or a paralytic stroke. Second, she must live a virtuous life and not run around with other men. The co-keeper and keeper, as also the ex-co-keepers and ex-keepers, since they had all been consecrated with peppermint and fumigation could handle the wild parsley without danger, but the common people were not immune to its supposedly highly toxic effects.

On this second day a big feast was given. Most of the food was provided by the new keeper and his relatives. That eaten by the new keeper and co-keeper, who had been fasting from food and water since the time they were first siezed a good thirty or more hours previously, was provided by the ex-keepers.

At sundown the day's instruction ended. That night the new keeper and co-keeper, the ex-keepers and ex-co-keepers and two attendants slept in the double lodge, where the Pipe also remained.

Very early the next morning (or less probably late on the

[1] In 1948 The Boy added: "When a man became keeper, he ceased to comb his hair and it would get in all kinds of shapes and hang down. So he would take a bunch from the center and wind it round and round and tied that knot of hair around with a string. Whenever the keeper took off that string the people would be afraid!" [R.F.]

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second day; our field information is not clear) the Flat Pipe which had been kept only loosely covered most of the time since the first night was ritually wrapped up in its bundle and the new keeper was told to observe carefully so he would know how the re-wrapping was done.

Meanwhile a regulation Flat Pipe sweat-lodge was put up, outside the camp circle as always and near the new keeper's lodge, for the new keeper and ex-keepers to sweat. In this sweat the women co-keepers did not join. The first after the Supreme Being (and other supernatural beings?) in the list of invitees to sweat was the new keeper, after him the ex-keepers. After all had taken their places inside the sweat-lodge, the retiring co-keeper carried the Flat Pipe, wrapped in its bundle, walking clockwise if necessary around the sweat-lodge, to the door thereof as the last. She entered by the east door, deposited the bundle in the place of honor at the west, and went out through the small west door. When it was time to take the Pipe out, she, accompanied by the new co-keeper, came to the west door, reached in and grasped the Pipe bundle, at once handed over the bundle to the new co-keeper and escorted her to the latter's lodge.

Then the new keeper and the ex-keepers sweated. When through, they put on their clothes and scattered to their lodges, the new keeper going back to his own, a new one which the retiring keeper and his relatives provided for him if his old one had been lost in the first night's raid. For every pin put in to hold the new lodge down he had to make a gift to the retiring keeper and the latter's relatives. So too even when they tied the door and showed the new keeper and his wife how to start their fire, make their bed, mount a horse, and so forth.

So ended the transfer rite proper. The new keeper and co-keeper were now consecrated, and had to live by the keepership code, no matter how they had previously lived.

So ended, too, the preliminary instruction. But further instruction was given from time to time later. When the new keeper, with the help of his relatives, would gather together sufficient property, he would seek further instruction from the Flat Pipe ex-keepers especially the last keeper or some particularly well-

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793 796 informed one, feasting them and also, *de regueur*, giving payment in valuable goods for each bit of instruction received. In these instruction sessions, the last keeper usually played the leading role, but the others would coach and correct when necessary or one of them if better informed on this or that point might teach while the last keeper took a back seat. The retiring co-keeper did most of the instruction of the new co-keeper. The Feathered Pipe keeper co-keeper, ex-keepers, and ex-co-keepers would commonly sit in at these sessions, but only as guests, without taking part in the instruction. Lame Bull, when first made keeper, got a great deal of his instruction from Deer, an earlier exceptionally well informed keeper.

793 608 A ritual relationship was contracted between the new keeper and co-keeper on the one hand and the ex-keeper and ex-co-keepers on the other. All the ex-keepers become "grandfathers" to the new keeper and co-keeper; all the ex-co-keepers, "grandmothers" to them; and are so addressed by these names respectively. The retiring keeper and co-keeper became, as it were, principal "grandfather" and "grandmother" respectively. This sacred relationship was looked upon as very like that between grandparents and grandchildren by blood. Privileged familiarity in the way of vulgar talk and banter, between these ritual grandparents and grandchildren, obtained, but not quite the large degree of freedom that obtained between grandparents and grandchildren by blood.[3] The ritual "grandfathers" and "grandmothers" also had certain recognized powers of control over their "grandchildren": if, for instance, one [626] of these "grandsons" went on a berserk rampage and was about to kill a fellow-tribesman, and his own father and mother could not bring him to reason, one of the ritual grandfathers might be called in to reason with his grandson and the latter would have to abandon his angry murderous design.

Keeper's Lodge

342 346 The Flat Pipe keeper's lodge was a large one, undecorated on the outside except for a portion painted red around the door.

[3] Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 121-22.

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784 517 fund of war exploits would be apt to give out, and the two would begin talking about trifling occurrences in camp, personal reminiscences about their marriages, and so forth. Everybody had a good time at such a three-day session.

Neither the keeper nor others were permitted to tell folk-tales of the vulgar or obscene Ni:hohat type in the former's lodge. If a member of a visiting group inadvertently broke the rule, a three-day session similar to the war-deed one above was prescribed, during which he had to continue telling such tales.

708 696 If a murder of a fellow-tribesman had been committed in camp, and the murdered person's relatives were about to kill the murderer in revenge, the latter could run to and take refuge in the keeper's lodge and was safe so long, but only so long, as he stayed there. The avengers dared not enter it to kill, but immunity ceased so soon as the murderer left the lodge.

624 361 There is general agreement among our informants that the keeper's lodge was pitched in a prominent place, but exactly where in the camp circle is a controverted point we did not succeed in clearing up. According to one tradition, it occupied the place of honor in the circle, toward the northwest—opposite the circle's opening which was toward the southeast or the rising sun,—regardless of where the keeper's band camped in the circle. Three, however, of our oldest informants, Coming Daylight, Takes-the-Bow, and Turn-Toes, held that the keeper remained with his band, the first two of the three stating that his lodge was pitched a little in front of his band toward the center of the circle.

Prerogatives and Restrictions of Keepership

793 The office of keepership carried with it on the one hand a great many special rights, privileges, prerogatives and powers and on the other a great many restrictions, obligations, responsibilities and sacrifices. The following list is undoubtedly incomplete, as new ones were still being revealed when our field work came to an end,[3] but it probably includes most of them. They functionally accord with sacred and high dignity of the keepership, the supernatural power attached to it, the lofty ethical behavior and "as-

[3] Kroeber, 1908, p. 273, has some we did not get.

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ceticism" expected of the keeper, his status as one set apart from his fellows, and his political and civil role in the Gros Ventre theocracy. We shall classify and treat them in this order, although some of them do not fit too neatly into any one of the five or six categories, and some straddle two or more of them. Incidentally, in many cases these refer to the co-keeper as well, although our field notes mention only the keeper.

The keeper and co-keeper of the Flat Pipe held a very sacred office of great eminence, and their persons and everything on or about them were considered holy. They themselves were expected always to behave in a dignified manner becoming their exalted and sacred position, and others were obliged to show them due respect.

The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted "to do foolish things like other people." They could not, for instance, take part in gossip or other petty meanness. They were obligated as well to many ethical, "ascetic" and ritual observances to be described presently.

Marked respect was due them from their fellow-tribesmen. As The Boy put it, the Gros Ventres, now all Catholics, "had just the same great respect for the keeper and his wife as they now have for the priests and nuns."

People had to keep their distance from the keeper and co-keeper, and could not sit close to them, or touch, grab or wrestle with them. Apparently, however, they could shake hands with them. If the keeper asked anyone to hand him something, the object had to be passed by hand, not thrown to him; if it were thrown toward the keeper on the ground and he had to pick it up, some accident would befall either the keeper or the thrower.

If anyone stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the sitting keeper or co-keeper, the guilty party would at once fall in a fit, or get cramps and could be cured only by the offended keeper or co-keeper. Likewise, if the keeper, intentionally or unintentionally, stepped over the outstretched legs of a sitting person, the person would get fits or cramps and could be cured only by the keeper.

If the keeper or an ex-keeper had the Flat Pipe or even a com-

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793 mon pipe in his hands, it was forbidden for anyone to pass in front
784 of him, under penalty of some evil befalling the culprit.

If a person, wanting something in a hurry from the keeper, such as meat or a bit of tobacco, just poked his (or her) head in the door of the keeper's lodge and made his request, no one inside would answer him. He would have to go all the way in, proceeding clockwise, make his request, and go out clockwise, not back out.

When the co-keeper gave a visitor something to eat in the Pipe lodge, the receiver had to eat it there and not take it out, unless someone told war stories. No one was allowed to take or grab anything seen in the Pipe lodge.

778 The keeper and co-keeper were by virtue of their office "holy"
782 persons, that is, endowed with supernatural powers. Some of these powers were related directly to their main task as custodians of the Pipe, leaders in its ritual, and intercessors with the supernatural world, and will be described under the ritual of the Pipe. Others were conferred on them at or subsequent to the transfer rite, partly to enable them to command the respect due them, partly to give them supernatural efficiency for their own or their people's advantage,—the former being mostly powers to harm, the latter mostly powers to help.

793 If anyone were guilty of disrespect to the keeper or co-keeper,
754 there were several avenging procedures to which they could resort.

During the transfer rite, the keeper and co-keeper were taught some form of cursing, so they would be properly respected. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. Deer, an ex-keeper who gave Lame Bull much of the latter's coaching for the keepership, told him after his mouth had been consecrated: "Be careful what you say. For if you utter an evil wish on anybody, the wish will come true." This power, it may be added, is more or less of a piece with the commonly possessed efficacy attributed in Gros Ventre idealogy to serious good or evil wish-thought. (See pp. 364-370.)

Deer also taught Lame Bull in his early keepership another harming power, but cautioned him not to use it unless someone failed to show proper respect to him as keeper. This power worked by "sympathetic" magic. Deer asked for a little pup and a piece of sinew. When these were brought he said: "Leave the pup near

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the door." Deer then in both hands held the sinew stretched taut horizontally over a smoldering chip and sang a song special to this rite, ending it with a recitative "Yo!" Then he lowered the sinew and repeated the song and "Yo," then lowered still more and repeated, concluding with "Yo, ho, ho, ho!" and finally put the sinew on the burning chip. As the sinew burned and buckled, the pup doubled up with cramps and died.

Another power, conferred for use by the keeper in case of disrespect committed against him, worked by "contagious" magic. The keeper watched the offender closely and made sure to locate his tracks, and then took out of the pipe bundle and put on his ritual moccasins the soles of which had been rubbed during the transfer rite with the poisonous wild parsley. Then, wearing the moccasins he stepped in the offender's tracks. As soon as he did so, the offender got a fit and then his legs and feet became weak and wobbly and nobody but the keeper could cure him.

The co-keeper for the same punitive purpose in case of disrespect or molestation carried wild parsley mixed with peppermint leaves in the sack attached to her belt, but we obtained no information on the precise procedure she used.

Two punitive procedures were told The Boy by his father but without full details. These "vulgar" powers were not broadcast but were kept more or less secret within the inner circle of the Flat Pipe.

If a woman disrespected a keeper or caused him great embarrassment, he carried out a special rite over or toward her, obliged her to submit to sex intercourse with him, and afterwards carried out a concluding rite. If some young man went so far as to flirt with her, make advances and touch her, he would get ill, and she alone could doctor him back to health. If he went so far as to have sexual intercourse with her, he would probably die.

As regards all the foregoing punitive and harming powers, it was strictly understood that the keeper and co-keeper were given them to use only to enforce respect, and that if used for other and evil purposes the users would pay dearly and would be punished in some way, through the death of their children or through other misfortune.

Besides these supernatural powers to command respect, other

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powers, intended more for the positive advantage of the keeper or his people, were customarily acquired during or after the transfer rite.

In the transfer rite the new keeper was taught how to doctor, especially in cases of fits, spasms and cramps. The peppermint beverage, now used by everybody for these maladies, was formerly a monopoly of the Flat Pipe keeper in his curing practice. Other doctoring powers were also conferred on him and he could use the hair rope from the Flat Pipe bundle as a potent medicine to cure with, but we could obtain no details on these points.

The keeper would pray to have good dreams and might sleep on the Pipe bed for the same purpose. His dreams, when told, were important news for his fellows, as through them the future could be foretold.

The keeper was also given power to summon, call or "snare" from a distance, enemies or reluctant friends. The Boy gave two instances of the use of this power, both from the lips of his father, Lame Bull. When Lame Bull, on learning of his election as Flat Pipe keeper fled to the hills, the ex-keeper so summoned him, using the Flat Pipe itself in the rite. The nine Flat Pipe songs were sung and at the end of each, the ex-keeper holding the Pipe at arm's length in both hands with the stem pointed upward and outward, sang the Hair Rope song, then twisted the stem tip in a vertical near-circle first upward and outward and then inward and downward in a sort of beckoning motion as if drawing something toward him, then downward and finally lowered the bowl toward (or to?) the ground.

On a later occasion during Lame Bull's keepership, on a war expedition against the Piegan he learned in a dream where they were located and was told that five of them would be killed. The night before the attack on the Piegan, using a common pipe and the above calling rite, thrice performed, with the pipe stem pointed toward the distant Piegan camp, invisible at the time to the Gros Ventre party, and singing the Hair Rope song, he "called" five of the Piegan, who, separated from the main Piegan body, were killed by the Gros Ventres.

The keeper and co-keeper also were given power to use in hunting buffalo, but we were able to obtain no details on the rite. The

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one occasion for which we obtained the account of Lame Bull's resort to this power, it failed to work.

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The keeper likewise received power to use in case his horse played out during a war raid. In the 1868 battle with the Piegan, Lame Bull's horse stepped into a hole and fell at a moment when he was surrounded by Piegan. Two young Gros Ventre warriors, sons-in-law of Lame Bull, came to him. His horse got up but could not run, and in fact fell again. One of the young warriors said to him: "I thought the Flat Pipe was everything. Why don't you save yourself. The Piegan will kill all three of us." Lame Bull, keeper at the time, took some peppermint from the small bag tied to his whip, put it in his mouth, sang a certain song, spat on his hands, stroked his whip handle three times with his palm, made motions three times as if striking his horse, and the third time actually struck the horse. At this, the horse came to life as if fresh and started running, and Lame Bull got home safely.

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Still another power conferred on the keeper was that of getting possession of a horse by obtaining a single hair thereof. Horses entered into the Feathered Pipe complex, not into the Flat Pipe one. But the Flat Pipe keeper could not be refused a request for a horse or horses made by him of anyone. Moreover, even though he did not directly make such a request, if he wanted a certain good horse, he could ask one of his relatives or good friends, surreptitiously and preferably by night, to pluck one hair from the horse's tail and bring it to him. The keeper would then perform some rite (details not obtainable by us) over the hair and put the hair in the Flat Pipe bundle, and pretty soon he would acquire the desired horse. It may be added that when the keeper walked near or around anybody's horse, he was watched suspiciously for fear that unobserved he would pluck a hair from the horse's tail.

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In addition to these specific supernatural powers, the keeper and co-keeper were given a great number of ritual powers, the right and duty to carry out certain ceremonies directly or indirectly related to the Pipe and its keepership. These will be described later under "Ritual."

In accordance with their sacred office and eminent dignity, with their role as benevolent intercessors for the people with the super-

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natural world and as beneficent helpers of their people, and the lofty ethical behavior and magnanimity demanded by the Gros Ventres' code in individuals of prominence in secular as well as in sacred activities, the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper were expected in general to live lives strictly conformed to the Gros Ventre ethical code and in particular to be generous and to repress aggressive impulses. The people would ordinarily be generous to them. For instance, after a successful buffalo hunt the killer or killers would share the spoils with them. But they themselves were under special obligations of generosity. If, for example, a person came to the keeper's lodge and, observing the rule above mentioned of going all the way inside, asked the keeper for something, the latter had to comply with the request and could not refuse it, and in actuality hardly ever refused. If the keeper lacked what was requested, he had to give the petitioner something else, for the latter would not be sent away empty-handed. This custom did not, it seems, lead to abuse and the keeper was not imposed upon. The keeper and his wife were required to be especially generous in providing feasts from time to time and in giving food to callers. Whenever any one came to the keeper's lodge to make an offering to the Pipe, the donor was fed.

When a man became keeper all grudges held by or toward him and the co-keeper were wiped away. They could no longer make their enemies the target of abuse or revenge, and vice versa.

As mentioned above, to command respect they could use the powers previously described, although at the risk of ensuing penalties. But for the rest, they were strictly forbidden to lose their tempers with, or show anger toward, anyone and particularly to strike anyone. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. If in a fit of anger they forgot themselves and hit or whipped a person, or even a dog or horse, the victim would be paralyzed. Nor could they talk badly about people.

The keepership imposed many major and minor hardships, austerities, privations and inconveniences upon the keeper and co-keeper. These had not, so far as we can judge, an ascetic purpose proper, that is, spiritual or moral self-control and achievement through self-denial. They did however serve, not only to set apart the keeper and co-keeper from the rest of the tribe but

also to enhance their sacredness and intercessory role as well as their prestige in the eyes of the people. Gros Ventre character-ideals have a high rating to "strong-heartedness," ability to bear and forego, readiness to do without, "asceticism" in its looser sense of voluntary self-punishment. Making one's self "pitiful" through hardships and privations in order to excite the sympathy of and to obtain blessings from the supernatural beings was a basic procedure in Gros Ventre religious practice. The keeper and co-keeper were expected to be sacred and powerful intercessors and to be individuals of high character.

In general the keeper and co-keeper had to lead very restricted lives, largely cut off from free association with their tribesmen, most of the time kept within or close to their lodge where the Pipe hung, and occupied with their official duties.

In particular they were under many specific privations and prohibitions. Perhaps the most severe of these was the obligation of sending away and thus practically giving up all their children, even their favorite one, except the one chosen as Pipe child. And ordinarily Gros Ventre parents were extremely fond of and attached to their children.

The keeper and co-keeper could not eat birds or bird eggs of any kind, nor any part of the head, such as the tongue or brains, of any quadruped. According to one tradition they could eat the body but not the head of dogs; according to another, not even the body. On the occasion however of feasts connected with the Flat Pipe they could eat buffalo tongue. They apparently did not eat fish, but the eating of fish was uncommon anyhow among the Gros Ventres and some Gros Ventres did not eat it at all. There were other minor food taboos, according to The Boy, but he could not recall what they were.

The co-keeper was obliged to wear a robe or blanket all the time, no small inconvenience during the Montana summer when the temperature not infrequently rises to the 90's Fahrenheit in the shade around midday and the afternoon. The prohibition against the wearing of metal personal adornments by the keeper and co-keeper was previously noted.

The keeper and co-keeper were not allowed to comb their hair, nor to scratch their heads except with a scratching-stick. The

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keeper (and probably the co-keeper too) could not cut his hair, but had to wear it tangled and disheveled.

The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted to bathe and swim in the creeks,—this in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom of daily early morning bathing and swimming by both sexes the year round when not prevented by ice, as a cleansing, body-hardening and recreative practice. In fact, the two were not allowed to wash even their hands and face with water, but, according to The Boy, had to use instead fat, grease or oil, and to wipe them with the same muskrat skin they used in face painting.

The keeper could not draw blood on his own person by cutting, as was done by others in the sweat lodge rite, in mourning, and on other occasions.

The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to cry or to cut their hair in case of the death of a relative, nor to go where any one lay dead, nor to have anything at all to do with a corpse. In particular they were not allowed to give clothes, at least their own, to put on a dead person. It was a breach of this last prohibition, in fact, that resulted in Lame Bull's lameness, and his subsequent sobriquet, Lame Bull, his proper name being Under Bull.[4]

The keeper and co-keeper could not gamble or be gambled with. If the keeper nevertheless did so and won, he won not only the wager, but also the life of his opponent. The latter would meet with some fatality unless the keeper agreed to avert the evil by performing the proper rite over him. The keeper would direct the man to build a sweat-lodge and would enter it with him. The man would fumigate himself and inhale the smudge. The keeper would rub the man all over from head to feet with sage.

The keeper was not allowed just to throw off his saddle or blankets onto the ground but had to take good care of them.

According to Coming Daylight, a keeper during his term of office "could not sing the songs he was supposed to sing," but we secured no clarification of this statement. The reference may be to songs previously gotten in quests for supernatural power.

In addition to the foregoing more or less restrictive or "ascetic" observances that served to set the keeper and co-keeper apart from

[4] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 201.

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their fellows, there were many other ones that fulfilled the same function. Of these latter, some, more distinctively ritual, will be dealt with later passim under "Flat Pipe Ritual"; others, more secular, may be mentioned now. 793 784

The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to carry a pack on their own backs, except that on the march the Pipe bundle might be packed by the co-keeper. [482]

They could not mount and dismount a horse on the same side, but mounted from the right side and dismounted from the left.

If you handed something to the keeper it became his property, and if he handed something to you it became yours. If you thoughtlessly left anything with the keeper or co-keeper to keep for you, —if, for instance, you said: "Here, hold my horse (or my gun)," —the object became the property of the keeper or co-keeper and could not be gotten back. The keeper and co-keeper never loaned their robes, dresses, moccasins or other belongings, unless asked, and they were not supposed to be asked to loan. If you thoughtlessly broke the code and asked to borrow something from them, they were obliged to give it to you to own. [426]

Neither the keeper nor co-keeper was allowed to handle ashes, nor could the Pipe bundle remain in the keeper's lodge when ashes were taken out. Were this rule violated, the keeper or co-keeper or both would lose eyesight. When ashes were to be removed from the keeper's lodge, the Pipe bundle was taken outside the lodge by the co-keeper, and both the keeper and the co-keeper stayed outside, while another of the keeper's wives removed the ashes.

When a group of men were seated in a crescent or near-circle enjoying a purely social smoke together, each took a puff from the lighted pipe and passed it clockwise to the man on his left until it reached the end of the line. Then the pipe would be passed back anti-clockwise from hand to hand to the other end without anyone puffing from it. But if the keeper were in the group, he could take a puff not only when the pipe was passing him clockwise but also on its anti-clockwise return. The man passing the pipe to the keeper from either left or right had to raise it upward a little toward his own right before doing so. The first time the pipe reached the keeper, he would take a big puff, and point 276 793

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●793 the pipe stem and blow the smoke first upward and then downward, and after that would smoke like anyone else.

793 In general, religious and political life were closely interwoven
624 in the Gros Ventre theocracy. "The Pipes [both the Flat and The Feathered]," as The Boy expressed it, "seemed to hold the tribe together more or less." They were the most sacred and revered possessions of the tribe. The keepers were men of eminence, by virtue of their personal qualities and achievements as well as of their office. In view of these and other facts, it is to be expected that the keeper of the Flat Pipe played a role in Gros Ventre political life, a role however not shared except in a minimal degree by the co-keeper, a woman in a man-dominated sphere of action. The keeper's role in Gros Ventre political life was fairly clearly defined and delimited. Here we shall summarize the main points.

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When camp was to be moved, the decision as to time and destination was mainly in the hands of the head men, although the keeper would participate. In some cases, it seems, he might initiate the move by calling the head men together, usually at night. The whole decision was not ordinarily announced by the crier or criers. He would be sent around to notify the people that all would move camp the next morning. They by looking toward the keeper's lodge in the morning would learn the direction in which the camp would move, for the Flat Pipe bundle would be taken out of the lodge, to the north thereof, and hung on its tripod, with the stem end pointing in the agreed upon direction of the trek. On the trek itself, the co-worker with the bundle led the cavalcade.

When the bands scattered for the winter after the fall hunt and for the late spring after the first spring hunts, usually both the Flat and Feathered Pipes attracted a large following.

The keeper could be invited to sit in important council meetings, and to participate in elections and in decisions involving policy or action and had a certain veto prerogative thereon. He could, on occasions at least, intercede with considerable power, to resolve conflicts and avert bloodshed. He could accompany war-parties and might even have a voice in strategy and tactics, but he was not *ex officio* a fighter or war-leader. He could, as

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previously mentioned, afford asylum in his lodge to criminals. All in all, he wielded very considerable influence in the political life of his people, but he was in no sense a dictator.

While a good many of the prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keeper and co-keeper ceased when their term of office ended, others automatically continued, beyond the period of keepership or, as regards restrictions, could be and often were voluntarily continued by the ex-keepers. Most of such cessations and continuances on which we obtained specific information have been explicitly or inexplicitly noted in the preceding pages.

Flat Pipe and Bundle: Description

The proper name of the Flat Pipe was θe:tsa. It was also called bä'ɔno (turtle), the turtle having played such an important role in the first making of dry land after the flood (for story see No. 3 in Appendix), and a turtle shell ranking next in dignity to the Flat Pipe itself in the Flat Pipe bundle. Bä'ɔno was used in an appealing, pleading or begging way.

The Flat Pipe bundle containing the Flat Pipe and other sacred objects could not be unwrapped and opened except on solemn ceremonial occasions and with the appropriate elaborate rites. The last such occasion was on February 6, 1946, when it was impossible for us to be present and when photographs taken turned out badly. Our description, therefore, of the Pipe and of the other contents of the bundle has to rest on detailed accounts given us by our various informants who had witnessed one or more openings, upon sketches of the Pipe drawn by The Boy in 1939, by Thomas Main in 1938 or 1939 (after an opening in 1938) and by a young high school student, Frank Cuts The-Rope in 1946 (after the above 1946 opening), and upon dimensions given by Thomas Main (See fig. 1).

The Flat Pipe itself is of wood, in a perfect state of preservation, carved in one piece, light brown or almost tan in color, very smooth as if polished from long and frequent wrapping, and about 18½ inches long. The bowl is round, low or squat, and flaring, 3⅛ inches in diameter on top with the hole for the tobacco about ½ inch in diameter, 2½ inches in diameter at its

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Keeper of the Feathered Pipe

The terms for the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child of the Feathered Pipe were the same as those for the keeper, co-keeper and Pipe child of the Flat Pipe.

Apparently the same high qualifications were required in the keeper of the Feathered as in the keeper of the Flat Pipe. Those specifically recorded by us were: "he had to be some good man and wealthy and noted"; "he had to be a man of intelligence to learn and know the rites and traditions and to maintain the dignity of the ceremonial." In actuality, not all keepers measured up to these lofty standards, as some of our informants emphasized, with ample supporting evidence.

As with the Flat Pipe, succession to the keepership could be either appointive or elective or else volunteer. According to the origin story of the Feathered Pipe, the man to whom the Pipe was first given, appointed, apparently on his sole authority, his uncle as keeper and turned over the Pipe to him.

The recent history of the Feathered Pipe for about the last 100 years can be pieced together from data furnished by Garter Snake, Al Chandler, The Boy, and Thick.

Iron Necklace was keeper somewhere around 1850.[1] He was succeeded by Big Beaver. Bull Lodge succeeded Big Beaver, his sister's husband as keeper. Garter Snake, daughter of Bull Lodge, became Pipe child at the age of six or seven. Bull Lodge had wanted to keep the Pipe until his son, Otter Robe, came of age and then to transfer it to him. But in 1879 or 1880 Bull Lodge was asked for it, asked four times for the Pipe by Sitting High, so he had to give in and transfer it to the latter. Sitting High held the keepership a long time, in fact until his death in 1905. This break with the traditional rule of a maximum 12 years is probably accounted for by the cultural disintegration which set in after the disappearance of the buffalo. As Garter Snake expressed it: "The new life had come in and there was no one to transfer the Pipe to." Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, was Sitting High's son, and Al lived as a boy with Sitting High in the

[1] The Boy in 1948 told a long story about his grandfather, Crow Moccasin, who was keeper of the Feathered Pipe probably around 1830-1840. [R.F.]

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793 174 latter's lodge where the Feathered Pipe was kept. When Sitting High died in 1908, at the age of 92, his only surviving widow, Kills in the Night, moved over with the Pipe to her uncle, old Sleeping Bear, who took charge of the Pipe. In 1910 Sleeping Bear gave the Pipe to Curly Head, the last keeper of it, who kept it until his death in 1937 (or 1938).

About 1930, during Curly Head's keepership, a certain young Gros Ventre, a cowboy (son of Bradley), had to pass through Curly Head's place at Lodge Pole. Curly Head gave him something to eat. The young man was looking at the Feathered Pipe bundle and noted that the wrapping of Hudson's Bay Company cloth was old. "That wrapping is old," he said, "I'll buy another for you." "All right," said Curly Head, "I am glad. We will discard the old wrapping."

The young fellow forgot all about the matter until the following summer, when in a dream someone said to him: "When are you going to buy that new wrapping for the Feathered Pipe?" This happened far from here. The young man was worried and made a special trip back to Curly Head, told him about his dream, and asked: "What shall I do?" "You better buy the wrapping you promised," said Curly Head. "This Pipe is no ordinary thing. Even though you were perhaps not serious when you made the promise, you better be on the safe side." "Where can I buy this kind of cloth?" he asked. "At Browning," said Curly Head, "You better go there or else send for it." "I will," said the young man. [165] The latter went away, and shortly after, while herding sheep, he was killed by lightning. And the Gros Ventres wonder today (1939) if this young man's death was a punishment for his failure to keep his promise.

Before his death Curly Head, knowing that his health was failing, came to Garter Snake and said: "Sister, you will be surprised some day. I'll keel over and quit. You were raised with the Feathered Pipe. Keep it as a keepsake." "I am blind," she said, "I cannot see. How can I take care of it? You better leave it in care of some one else." "All right," said Curly Head, "I'll leave it with Iron Man. But you see that it is not disposed of in any way. This Pipe has to remain with the Gros Ventres forever. Remember that the Feathered Pipe is the main hope of the Gros Ventres,

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and as long as you live see that they do not sell it or part with it."

So at Curly Head's death the Pipe fell to Iron Man II (Tall Jack), a relative of Curly Head, who since 1937 (1938) has looked after it. In 1948 it was still being kept in Curly Head's house.[8]

The normal term of keepership of the Feathered Pipe was four years. The very first keeper held the office 80 years, according to the origin story given by Garter Snake, and some later ones, according to tradition, up to 20 years, but the usual limit was supposed to be at most two or three terms, that is, eight or twelve years.

There was always a Pipe woman or co-keeper, wife of the keeper. She handled the Pipe bundle and in general had about the same ritual and other duties toward it as had the co-keeper of the Flat Pipe toward the Flat Pipe bundle. The Feathered Pipe keeper had to have at least two wives, for during her menses the co-keeper could not handle the bundle and had to sleep and live outside the keeper's lodge and another wife of the keeper had to substitute for her in the handling and care of the bundle.

There was always, too, a Pipe child,—a girl, unless the keeper had no daughters, in which case a son could be selected by him as Pipe child. Thus the oldest son of Sitting High, who had no daughters, became Pipe child. The Pipe child was not necessarily appointed at once by the keeper on assuming the keepership. Garter Snake was not made Pipe child until she was about six years old. Iron Necklace who had been Feathered Pipe keeper some

[8] In the summer of 1951, Iron Man, assisted by The Boy, had a ceremonial opening of the Feathered Pipe bundle. Dr. Louis B. Hagener, Professor of Biology of Northern Montana College, accompanied by his wife, and Dr. Otto Nitz, Professor of Chemistry, now at Stout Institute of Technology, Menominie, Wisconsin, were among the spectators. The pictures in Plates 2 B-C, 3 A-D, were taken by Dr. Nitz at that time. Dr. Hagener has kindly supplied information regarding the 1951 ceremonial. He writes under date of Aug. 8, 1954, as to final disposal of the Feathered Pipe bundle: "Since the young people were so apathetic over the bundle, its significance, and the ceremony, Iron Man and his wife had resolved not to open it again. They were debating as to whether it should be given to a museum or whether the tribe would outfit Iron Man and his wife for a journey and permit them to dispose of it somewhere in the mountains." [R.F.]

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793 years before her father's keepership was the one who was asked to "confirm" the appointment of Garter Snake [ritual details not obtainable by us] and was given a good horse for performing the ceremony.

The Pipe was addressed and spoken of as the child of the keeper and co-keeper, and they looked upon themselves as the father and mother of the Pipe. When the Pipe talked to them in their dreams it addressed them as "father" and "mother" respectively. To the Pipe child, the Pipe was brother. The Pipe was very jealous, and wanted to be the lone child and so all the keeper's children except the Pipe child were supposed to be put out of the keeper's lodge. According to Garter Snake, however, her father's other children slept in his lodge, not however with the keeper and co-keeper but in separate beds. Garter Snake herself when very young slept with her parents, but later on a separate bed near the foot of theirs. Al Chandler when he was a little boy used to stay with his grandfather, Sitting High, then keeper. The latter would make a bed for the boy right under the Pipe—"which usually was not allowed, [782] but he did it because I was an orphan, and he would pray that I would be healthy, live to old age, and everything like that. He did that every night as long as I was there."

If a new keeper happened to have a young wife with an infant, they were sent to another lodge.

Some of the activities, duties, and attitudes of a Pipe child can be gathered from the following account by Garter Snake of her own experiences.

"When I was the Pipe child, whenever my mother took the Pipe bundle outside of the lodge, I took the tripod out after her. I was told how to set the tripod when the camp was about to move, with two of the legs close together and the third far out. Whenever my father made smudge with pine needles, he would give me some and I would chew them and would hold my hands over the smudge. Then I would rub my left palm up my right arm, my right palm up my left arm, then both palms from the top of my head down the sides of my neck and down my breast.

"I did not have any duties beyond helping my mother when she brought the Pipe bundle out and brought it in.

[784] "I was forbidden to pick peppermint. If peppermint was mixed

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in dried pounded meat, I was not allowed to eat the meat. If a coyote or wolf were killed, I was not supposed to touch it. These were the only two prohibitions I was under.

"If anybody vowed to be painted by the keeper, I would be present at the rite next to my mother and sit there through the ceremony.

"Whenever while I was Pipe child I got sick my father would put pine needles on me, and then he would take down the bundle and put it on my parents' bed, and would say to me: 'Put your arms around your brother [the Pipe] and pray to your brother so you may get well.' The Pipe keeper and his wife claim the Feathered Pipe as their son and tell their children that the Pipe is their brother. When I put my arms around the Pipe I was told to say to the Pipe: 'My dear brother, have pity on me, that I may get well of my illness.'

"Of course the Pipe was not human but because I was a baby when my father got it I grew up with it and thought just as much of it as of my own blood relatives. When my father transferred the Pipe to Sitting High I was outside playing. When I was coming home I saw the bundle at Sitting High's door, and when I saw it I started to cry, and when I saw my father I said to him: 'Why did you give my Pipe away?' It was just like a person leaving. I was lonesome for it, and felt just as if I had lost a relative or friend. And all through my life I have felt the same toward it. All through my life I have made it a point to be present at any Feathered Pipe ceremony. And whenever I went to any ceremony, I would bring something for it. Since I joined the Catholic Church I stopped doing this, but even now I feel: 'It's all alone. I pity it.'

"When while I was Pipe child I had been out playing and in the evening would come home and see the Pipe bundle over the door, I would stand and look at it a long time and would say: 'Feathered Pipe, I am going into our lodge now.' Once when I was sitting on the bed in the lodge I got to thinking, and all the folks were there, and I said: 'Feathered Pipe, my dear brother, look down on me and watch over me.' I was not told to say this, and I do not know what made me say this prayer to the Feathered Pipe.

"My father used to tell me: 'This Pipe was given by the Su-

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●793 preme Being through Bha'a, the Supreme Being is the father of the Pipe.'"

In the cases where the new keeper was elected in secret conclave and not told or asked beforehand, at night after the camp was asleep a group sneaked up to the electee's lodge, and one of the group carrying the feathered stick from the Pipe bundle entered the lodge. If the electee tried to escape, the watchers outside would grab and hold him. The electee was raided and lost everything, his lodge and horses and other belongings,—just as the man to whom the Pipe had first been given from above lost everything. Afterwards, however, the relatives and friends of the electee, anybody that could, would give a new lodge, new bedding and other lodge equipment, and horses,—as was done to the first owner and keeper.

After being grabbed, the new keeper and his wife were carried —they did not walk—to the lodge of the retiring keeper who put a cloth over their heads. They were thus in the dark and didn't know what was going on until a special song was sung and the cloth removed. We were unable to secure many details of the transfer rite. The rite included, of course, ritual and other instruction of the new keeper, and co-keeper for which he had to pay handsomely,—for instance, a horse for a ritual song taught him. For these payments he had to count on his relatives and friends who, later in the course of his keepership, would receive equivalent presents in return. A central feature of the transfer rite was the new keeper's dance with the Pipe. In earlier times, in fact up to about 1905, it was only the keeper, we were informed, who could dance with the Pipe and this only at the transfer rite.

[431]

Apparently the lodge of the Feathered Pipe keeper was very like that of the Flat Pipe keeper, and under similar respect taboos, but we were able to obtain only fragmentary specific information.

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At the back of the lodge, in the place of honor opposite the door, was the Pipe bed of sage brush, laid down with the tip ends pointed toward the lodge center, and covered with a white buffalo robe. When the group was camping at the same site for any length of time, in good weather the Pipe bundle was hung up during the daytime over the lodge door.

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All movement within the lodge was clockwise. There could be

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no crying by children in the lodge; if a child started to cry it was taken out at once. Dogs were not allowed in the lodge, nor could the keeper use a dog robe. Bones could not be broken in the lodge to extract marrow, as in the case of the Flat Pipe lodge and under the same penalty. War-deed contests in the Feathered Pipe lodge were prohibited and penalized, as in the Flat Pipe lodge,—with a four-day penalty. The right of asylum was recognized exactly as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge.

The lodge occupied a place of honor in the camp circle, but whether opposite the opening of the circle or just in front of the keeper's band is controverted, as in the case of the Flat Pipe keeper's lodge (see p. 58).

The prerogatives and restrictions attaching to the keepership of the Feathered Pipe appear to have been quite similar in number and kind to those attaching to the keepership of the Flat Pipe, although we did not obtain as full details regarding them as we did for the Flat Pipe. We shall mention only those prerogatives and restrictions for which we obtained specific information. The functional relation of the various prerogatives and restrictions to the sacredness and dignity of the keepership was quite the same for both Pipes.

In accord with the dignity of their office, the keeper and co-keeper were expected to comport themselves respectably on all occasions and to conform to the strict ethical norms to be mentioned presently.

The people were in turn expected to treat them with great respect. Things asked for by the keeper had to be handed to him, not thrown, exactly as with the Flat Pipe keeper, and under the same penalty. If someone absent-mindedly stepped over the outstretched feet or legs of the keeper, the latter would keel over in a faint and the co-keeper would have to smudge him ritually to bring him to, or the offender would fall down with a "cramp." Coming Daylight once saw a woman in a crowded place step over the feet of the Feathered Pipe co-keeper. The woman "fell in a cramp." Her mother got angry and upbraided the co-keeper: "You ought to know better than to leave your feet sticking out." But her sister went over and kissed the co-keeper and begged her in a nice way to doctor the stricken woman. So the co-keeper got up and

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793 blew medicine on the woman who then recovered. If you even
784 passed in front of the keeper, you would "drop in a cramp."

Food offered in the keeper's lodge, even on a purely social and informal occasion, had to be eaten there and could not be taken out unless some one told a personal war-deed. This taboo applied even to an ex-keeper guest, although not to the actual keeper's
[576] children. The keeper could break up the gathering by emptying his own pipe—a recognized Gros Ventre convention for hosts.

[821] If anybody threw water at the keeper or hit him with water, this would cause rain.

Where a group of men were seated in a row or crescent having a purely social smoke, the general procedure was as previously described. If the Pipe keeper were one of the group, the man passing the pipe to him on either the clockwise or return circuit would first make a gesture with it "to the rear between himself and the keeper," if you didn't do that the keeper would not accept it.

The powers of the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper specifically recorded by us were similar, apart from control of storm, rain and flood and, as far as they went, to those of the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper. The weather control powers will be described later under Feathered Pipe ritual.

[753] Anyone who stepped in the track of the keeper or co-keeper got a fit, for the soles of their moccasins were kept treated with wild parsley.

The keeper and co-keeper acquired by reason of their office certain doctoring powers.

787 The keeper had marked dreaming and forecasting powers, just
793 as the Flat Pipe keeper had, and his dreams when told to the people were "big news." In a dream he would, for instance, see animals fighting the Gros Ventres and this would be a warning to a war-raiding party to act discreetly. He would foretell from his dreams who would win in a prospective battle and how many would be killed. At the time the Flat Pipe was captured by the Assiniboine (see No. 8 in Appendix), the Feathered Pipe owner was fore-warned by the Pipe in a dream and he and his party escaped. If the keeper had a dream that foreboded evil fortune he would on waking talk to the Pipe and ask it not to let the evil

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happen. If told in a dream, perhaps by the owl, of an impending epidemic, he might call all the people to his lodge and ritually paint them. If he dreamed of bad luck about to befall some individual in camp, he would tell him: "I dreamed that something was going to happen to you. You better make an offering. I will pray for you and try to avert the misfortune, but you must help."

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In general the keeper and co-keeper of the Feathered Pipe were expected to live strictly in conformity with Gros Ventre ethical norms. Specifically recorded by us as unbecoming and forbidden to the keeper were: stealing, fighting, quarreling, losing temper, wife-beating, talking evil of fellow-tribesman, "talking dirty," threatening to kill, and, for more recent times, cursing and swearing like the whites.

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The Feathered Pipe keepership seems to have involved for the keeper and co-keeper about the same privations and restrictions as did the Flat Pipe, although we obtained explicit information only regarding the following ones.

"The keeper of the Feathered Pipe was not supposed to comb his hair. It was all matted and made him look different from other men. You see him and you know at once he is a Pipe man. Sitting High's hair was that way. The locks were stuck together in the back. It made him look like a holy man. He never cut his hair and was not supposed to put water on it. His wife [the co-keeper] could comb her hair, but I do not think she could put water on it."[8]

The keeper could not bathe or swim in a stream; if he did, there would be rain. He could not wash his face but wiped it off with a cloth. He could not cut himself as a sacrifice or as a sign of mourning. He could not cry at mourning, not in the presence of the Pipe. Gambling by or with the keeper was forbidden, under the same penalty of life and with the same rite of absolution as described for the Flat Pipe keeper.

According to Al Chandler, the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper, in contrast to the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper and

[8] In 1948 Al Chandler added: "The keeper cannot eat eggs, chicken, the head of any animal, nor dogs. In fact nothing about dogs was allowed near the keeper. Wherever they were, no one could walk in front of the keeper or co-keeper." [R.F.]

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793 also to the whites, both mounted and dismounted their horses from the right side, just as all other Gros Ventres did.

784 "You could not lend the Feathered Pipe keeper a horse, because if you loaned it to him this was just the same as giving it to him. You could not take it back once the rope was in his hands. The keeper never borrowed anything. If someone thought the keeper was short of something and without thinking said to him, 'Here is one you can use,' that was just too bad because that was really giving it to him."

[201] Apparently the keeper could not point at a person with his index finger, but would instead use his thumb.

793 624 The role of the Feathered Pipe keeper in the political life of the Gros Ventre was quite similar to that of the Flat Pipe keeper, as regards such things as decision when and whether to move camp, matters of public policy, and veto power thereupon.

Feathered Pipe and Bundle

773 778 The Feathered Pipe was first given, as noted in the origin stories (see No. 6 in Appendix), from above by Bha'a, the thunder and storm being. Garter Snake's father, Bull Lodge, used to tell her that it was really given by Ixtcibani:hohat, the Supreme Being, through Bha'a; that the Supreme Being was the father of the Pipe; and that it was to remain forever with the Gros Ventres and never under any condition to be transferred to any other tribe. According to Gros Ventre tradition, while the Feathered Pipe is very old, it is not as old as the Flat Pipe; when the Feathered Pipe was first given to the Gros Ventres, they were already in the possession of horses. According to The Boy, the Feathered Pipe was first given after the Gros Ventres came to their present territory which had previously been Snake Indian country, but before the coming of the whites thereto. With the Pipe itself were given in the beginning the stone image or face, the whistle, and the staff, to be described presently.

778 The proper name of the Feathered Pipe was ana:θanitč (it has feathers).

776 We were unable to attend any unwrapping rite and to see the Pipe. It was described to us as being in one piece, of "smooth,"

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been previously described. Some additional data on tobacco and wild parsley as associated with the Feathered Pipe help fill out the picture.

The keeper of the Feathered Pipe raised tobacco, as did the very first keeper, whose tobacco patch was raided by the people after the great war exploit of his son, He-Who-Dreams-of-Bha'a.

If anyone but the keeper [or co-keeper] touched the "wild parsley" root the delinquent would get fits, out of which he could be brought only by the keeper working on him and "blowing this same stuff on him." Old Deafie did not believe all this and there were other skeptics, some of whom, even small boys, would touch "wild parsley" to test out the belief and would immediately have fits. Al Chandler had heard of many such cases, although he had never seen any himself.

Sitting High used always to carry a couple of pinches of wild parsley in a little buckskin pouch in his pocket to use against rattlesnakes. On one occasion when Al Chandler was about 18 years old he and his grandfather (Sitting High) were at Henry Martin's place on the Hays side of the Bear Paws. Al was eating cherries at the creek bank, saw a big rattlesnake, and shouted to his grandfather. The latter imitated the snake's angry rattle, wet the end of a six-foot willow stick and stuck it in a small bit of wild parsley, then touched the snake with this end, and so "knocked the snake stiff." Some time later Al went to the spot to look and there he found the rattler dead, "bloated and stinking." Al Chandler, on another occasion, near Snake Butte, saw his grandfather kill a rattler in the same manner, merely touching it with the wet parsley-treated end of a stick.

Among the skeptics was Little Man, son of Sitting High and Al's adoptive father. He would even eat "wild parsley." On one occasion, Little Man took Jimmy, Al's three or four-year-old son, with him to the creek to wash, and while there was about to give Jimmy a bit of the wild parsley to eat, "to give him the power to use," when Al happened to see what was going on and told Jimmy: "Don't, that is poison." Little Man laughed and said: "It won't hurt him. I am giving it to him. I was going to give him this power. What is the matter with you? Why don't you eat it?" But Al said:

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song had also to be sung, apparently to the accompaniment of the drum.

Putting sweet pine needles on the sick person's head, blowing wild parsley on him, and smudging him as doctoring practices have been previously described. According to Singer, if some one were so sick that his life was despaired of, the keeper would take the Feathered Pipe [the bundle, probably] and lay it on him and pray over him, and the sick person would recover, and, she added, "it cured a lot of them." Doctoring power was regularly acquired by reason of acquiring the keepership.

The keeper and co-keeper painted their own faces every morning after breakfast, like the men, in two bands, but broader ones three or four fingers wide, one on the forehead near the hair line and the other from one jaw across the chin to the other jaw.

The Pipe bundle was smudged by the keeper every morning and evening with sweet pine needles. During Curly Head's keepership Cora Chandler and her children were kept busy collecting dried cow dung for the daily smudging ceremony. The keeper made it a practice to "talk" or pray often to the Pipe in his lodge. According to The Boy, the keeper was fearful lest otherwise he might make ritual mistakes, at which the Pipe would be angry. According to Al Chandler, the Pipe being jealous, the keeper "had to talk to it to let it know it was not forgotten or put away; he treated it just like a person."

Customary observances on the occasions of feasts or ordinary meals to guests in the keeper's lodge have been previously described.

When the keeper and the people were camped for any length of time in a given place, the Feathered Pipe bundle was ordinarily taken in the morning from its place of honor opposite the entrance inside the keeper's lodge, hung up outside over the entrance, and brought back inside at eventide.

When the camp was to be moved, the Feathered Pipe keeper, like the Flat Pipe keeper, had, it seems, a consultative voice in the decision and perhaps even veto power at times, although ordinarily the final decision was made by the head men. The decision once made, early in the morning when camp was to be broken, the Feathered Pipe bundle was hung out on its tripod back of the